

# **New York Hazardous Substances Emergency Events Surveillance: Learning from Hazardous Substances Releases to Improve Safety**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Releases of hazardous substances have injured employees, responders, students and the general public. These events have been accidental (e.g. equipment failure or human error) and deliberate (e.g. assault or terrorism).

Releases have occurred during transport, at facilities that manufacture or use chemicals, and in homes. Since 1993, the New York State Department of Health, funded by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, has collected data about non-petroleum hazardous substances releases through the Hazardous Substances Emergency Events Surveillance (NYHSEES) project. This presentation, which will include actual case studies, will summarize data collected from 1993 to 2002 on more than 5,000 non-petroleum events with more than 2,200 injured persons.

Data will show the types of hazardous substances released, including the chemicals most frequently associated with events and those most frequently associated with injuries. Data analyses include: causes/ contributing factors; injured populations (responders, employees, students and the public) and their injuries; personal protective equipment worn by those injured; medical outcomes; evacuations (numbers of evacuees and duration); and decontamination activities.

Discussion will include uses of the data for training, planning and prevention activities.